

itual association for promoting friendships, for attracting the unconverted, for supplying wholesome entertainment, for developing piety and for practical Christian work. Its meetings—held every week—should be training schools for new converts, in which they can learn how to speak and to pray in public. Unless a convert is called out into some such spiritual activity during the first year, he is very apt to be a tongue tied "silent partner" all his life; unless he is set to work early he will lapse into a drone. In such Associations there is use for committees on devotional meetings, on social entertainment, on tract distribution, temperance work, on mission-schools and visitation of the sick, and kindred good objects. (The Association in my church own and manage a mission school entirely.) It comes next to the Sabbath school—and very close to it—as a practical agency for getting hold of young men and bringing them to the Savior and training them for a strong, useful life.

Now, here are two answers, among others, to the burning question of "how to reach the young." Let us thank God for "Young Men's Christian Associations," and do our utmost to sustain and extend them. But the Christian Church is the divinely appointed agent for making the Gospel of salvation visible, audible, legible, and efficacious for every age and in every condition of life. Every pastor should begin—where the Tempter begins—with the young. Every church should keep open doors and open hearts for young men. Failure at that point is fatal. Success at that point will insure victory to this world's only Saviour.

Brooklyn, New York.

The Christian Life

The Poverty of Christ

O, my King, and was it so,
Didst Thou suffer all this woe?
Didst Thou wander thus forlorn,
Bearing poverty and scorn;
Lord of all the realms above,
Reft of home and human love,
In the world that Thou hadst made,
Nowhere couldst Thou lay Thy head?

If we could at all conceive
All the glory Thou didst leave;
All the splendor of the throne
That for us Thou didst disown;
Catch but one imperfect ray
Of Thine everlasting day;
And in that supernal light
See Thy majesty aright.

How could we believe that Thou
To these human griefs could bow;
How, amidst these lower things,
Recognize the King of kings;
Washing the disciples' feet,
Sitting with the poor at meat;
Bearing daily pain and loss,
Dying on the shameful cross?

Only as Thyself hath shown
What the glory of Thy throne;
What, in all the realms of light,
Is the source of chief delight;
What, in all Thy life below,
Made Thee bear Thy load of woe;
By the truth all truth above,
We know Thee, God, for "God is love."

—New York Observer.

PRAYER MEETING TOPICS

THE PARABLES.—"THE GREAT SUPPER."

I The Parable. Luke 14: 15-24.

a. What called it forth? v. 15.

b. Explanation. (1) "A certain man," equals God. I Tim. 6: 17. (2) Those invited equals the Jews. Rom. 10: 21. Of course we Gentiles are included now. (3) The "servant," equals Jesus. Luke 22: 27. (4) The "supper," equals the blessings of the kingdom which Jesus preached. I Cor. 2: 9.

c. The excuses. (1) Had to see a farm. Matt. 13: 22. (2) Had to try a new yoke of oxen. I Tim. 6: 9, 10. (3) Had married a wife. Luke 14: 26.

d. Those who came when invited. (1) The poor. (2) The maimed. (3) The halt. (4) The blind. Luke 7: 22; 14: 12-14.

e. These classes are the despised even to-day.

II Teachings

a. The things given as excuses are not in themselves sinful. We can lose our souls by abusing good things. I Cor. 7: 31.

b. Excuses are always silly. Only reasons pass with God.

c. God isn't particular about the worldly and physical condition of a man. He looks at the condition of the soul. I Sam. 16: 7.

d. Are we guilty of excuses for not doing God's bidding?

J. L. GILLIN.

The Power of Prayer

God will honor the prayer of a consecrated heart, and tho the answer may be long delayed, yet the Christian has the promise of a harvest in due time from the seed of his sowing. The following incident in "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," by Rev. James B. Walker, is a sweet and comforting thought for mothers who sometimes feel that their prayers go unanswered:

In a family whose name was Taylor, residing in England, the mother was known as a woman of unusual piety. She had a large family of children. It was her daily habit to take these children into her room and read a portion of scripture and pray for each of them severally. They were all, as she hoped, converted at an early age, except the youngest one, whose name is George. This one resisted her entreaties, and seemed to pay no heed to her supplication. From youth to manhood he grew more obstinate and reckless, and terminated his connection with home by enlisting, as a common soldier, in the English army. The mother was grieved, but did not despair. The company into which her son had enlisted was ordered to Quebec, in Canada; but she continued at the same hour each day, to pray specially for him, as she had for her other children. His course, however, in Canada, where I then resided, as far as the restraints of a soldier's life would permit, was unsteady, and disorderly and profane.

On a certain Sabbath day, the mother knew not why, she was strongly impressed to pray for her absent son, and asked her friends in

the church to unite with her in special prayer for the salvation of her son, George, then a common soldier in Quebec, of whose case her friends were acquainted. They met and prayed unitedly and specially that the young man might be "snatched as a brand from the burning."

At the same hour, as nearly as could be ascertained, the young man was in a drinking saloon, with companions as violent and wicked as himself. His statement is that an undefined sense of fear and sin came to him, so that he must leave the place, which he did, intending to go to his barracks. On his way home, seeing a church door open and hearing singing, he entered the place, and in the agony of his mind cried for mercy to God. That night he became a new man. His companions ridiculed and persecuted him for weeks. He labored for their salvation individually, and when I last knew the company all but about twenty professed discipleship to Christ.

The Habit of Private Devotions

In this busy age there is great danger of neglecting one's private devotions. Yet such devotions are absolutely essential to the spiritual growth and development of the divine life in the soul. We need to take time for private devotion, to get away from the toiling, moiling, and turmoil of this busy world, retire into some secret place and spend much time in meditation. We need to think much on God, on heaven and heavenly things. In this way only can we grow into strong Christian characters and Christlikeness. The following from an exchange contains some beautiful and sweet thoughts, which, if appropriated will prove most helpful to the Christian:

The spiritual life in the soul can not be maintained without secret communion with God. The teaching and example of Christ are most explicit on that point. It is safe to say, says The Congregationalist, that, unless this habit be maintained conscientiously, the quality of our piety suffers. Doubtless the neglect of it has been the cause of more backsliding from spiritual success and service than any one of what we commonly call severe temptations. There is a peculiar and vital profit in common, public devotions. They enrich and upbuild the soul by kindling our holiest sympathies and quickening our most sacred purposes. But they do not and can not, do for us what private, individual communion with God accomplishes.

We need to be alone with him sometimes and often. Otherwise we can not enter into those close and confidential relations with him which means so much to the truly Christian heart. In public worship, even tho we do but join as silent participants, we can not make confession of our faults, lay before our Father freely our own personal and special needs, and become aware of his Holy Spirit's response and interest, as we can when we are in our closets. We need, and most who truly belong to Christ have learned how to profit by, such personal intercourse with God. It is an unspeakable privilege which must not be disregarded.

But the spirit of our times in a large degree is unfriendly to it. Engagements of